

January 21 2009

Senator John Esp, Chairman
Local Government Committee
Montana Senate
PO Box 200500
Helena, MT 59620-0500

Sir,

I wish to support the passing of Senate Bill No. 56.

I am a full-time resident of the Double Arrow Ranch subdivision located in Seeley Lake with my wife Sara Wilcox and until recently a regular attendee of board meetings of the landowners' association.

During the last two years changes made unilaterally by the current board and its immediate predecessor, elected by an illegal electoral process, where certain paperwork was destroyed which should have been retained for record purposes and other discrepancies, have removed the resident's rights to attend monthly board meetings, where the business of the association is conducted, correspondence read etc.

Half of Board meetings are now closed to the landowners and 'the board' now holds these meetings in private, without minutes or other oversight.

Residents should have a right to transparency from their elected officials who are responsible for the dispersion of annual funds paid by the landowners and to hear the board's discussions upon those dispersals and any other business concerning their interests.

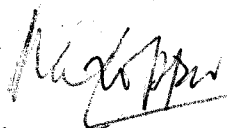
The funds concerned are not small, a quarter of a million dollars, and the tasks for which the board is responsible are of equal importance to the landowners.

Until recently all board meetings were open and discussion from attendees brisk and informed.

This landowners' association has seen fit to exclude these "people of Montana" from the "constitutional right" they hold for participation in this 'quasi-governmental' association.

I hope that your committee will consider this matter and recognise that many landowners in similar positions to those represented here, are in need of legal guidelines and regulations that remove the possibility of monetary loss, misrepresentation and other aspects of lack of transparency, and are given the right to actively participate in the government of their property and its surroundings.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Michael Cropper', written over a horizontal line.

Michael Cropper

FYI: I am a 74 year old retired Maritime Librarian.

Sara Wilcox, my wife, is a Missoula native, raised there and in Seeley Lake.

PO Box 1423

Seeley Lake

MT 59868

406 677 5251